

Brief Analysis of Assertion of Pre-Existing Cement Pad Underlying Newly Asphalted Area at Jetport Site

July 8, 2025

Christopher McVoy, Ph.D.

In response to questions as to whether any new milling or paving had been authorized and/or had occurred at the Dade Collier Training and Transition Airport, Ms. Stephanie Hartman of the Florida Division of Emergency Management has provided the following statement:

From: Stephanie Hartman <stephanie.hartman@em.myflorida.com>

Sent: Monday, July 7, 2025 7:48 PM

To: Hardesty, Brock <BHardesty@firstcoastnews.com>

Cc: FEMA-R4-NewsDesk@fema.dhs.gov <FEMA-R4-NewsDesk@fema.dhs.gov>; WTLV-NEWS
<news@firstcoastnews.com>

Subject: Re: STATEMENT REQUEST - FIRST COAST NEWS

The area referenced consisted of a preexisting cement pad that was installed more than 50 years ago. Over time, a thin layer of dirt and grass had settled on top.

Stephanie Hartman
Deputy Director of Communications
Florida Division of Emergency Management
Stephanie.Hartman@em.myflorida.com

Response from Dr. Christopher McVoy, (soil science):

While the above statement by Ms. Stephanie Hartman might possibly be true, I can find no evidence to support it. Instead, all historical imagery I found suggests that the area was cleared of vegetation, and perhaps also leveled, probably at the same time that the runway was constructed (ca. 1968-70). Patterns in the historical imagery suggest systematic traversing of the area by equipment, likely by large mowers or brush hogs. A “thin layer of dirt and grass” on top of a cement pad would be unlikely to need mowing and would be very unlikely to produce the patterns seen. Additionally, the high rainfall intensity of South Florida thunderstorms would likely prevent the accumulation of anything more than a few millimeters of unconsolidated sediments on a cement pad. A layer that thin would not support sufficient growth to require mowing.

The more probable explanation of the imagery from this location is an area of original soil, cleared of brush and trees around 1970, and subsequently kept to low vegetation by periodic mowing. While there might well have been an original intent to cover with a cement pad, there is no indication that such a pad was ever installed.

The following slides identify the location in question, show multiple years of historical satellite images, and an oblique aerial photograph from 1970, taken during the time of initial construction.



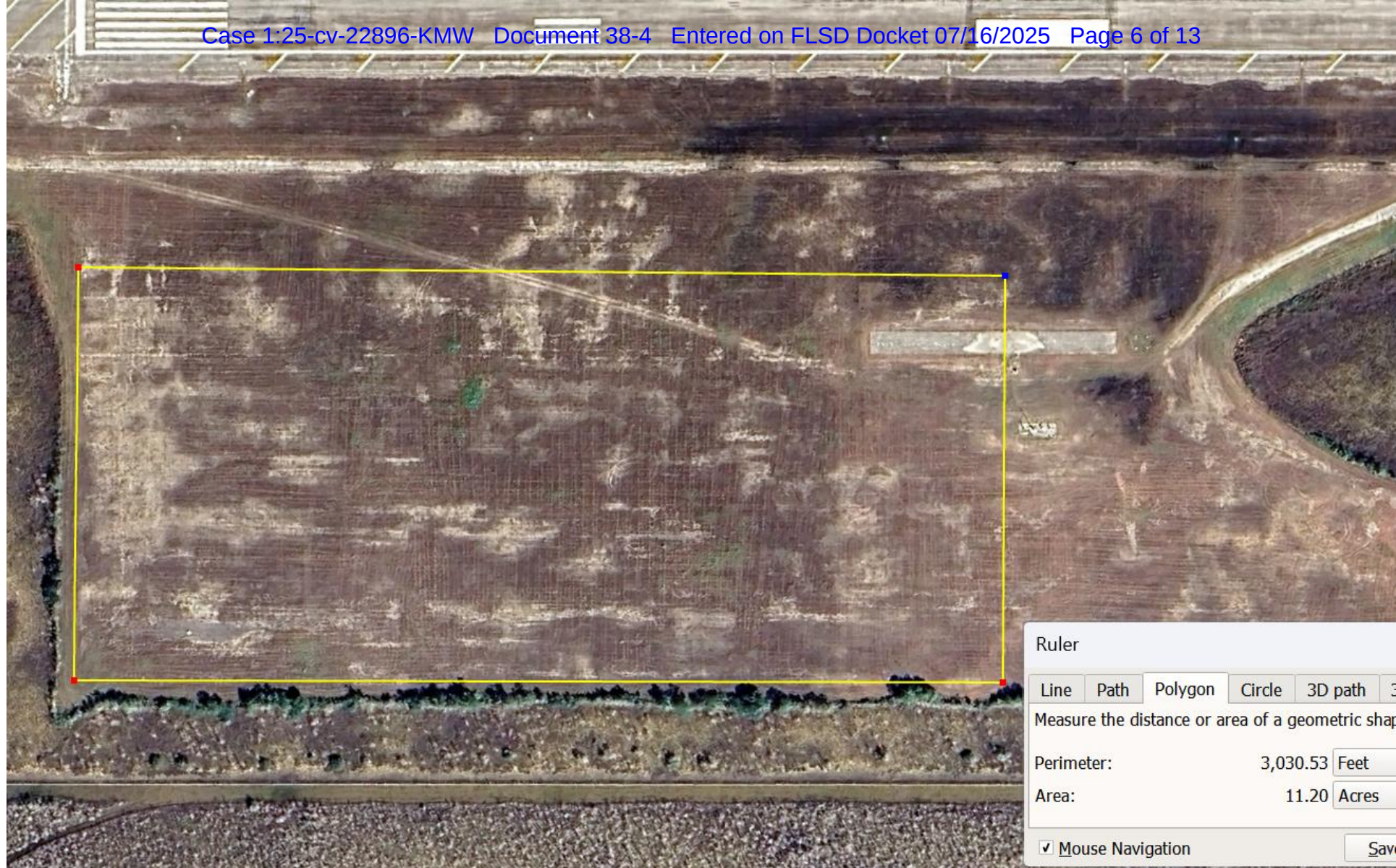
Photo 23,
Looking S.

Dark
rectangle
is new con-
struction
(asphalt
pad).



Detail of Photo 23. Dark rectangle is new construction (compare with June 2025 Google Earth satellite imagery). Dark is almost certainly asphalt paving. Light sandy brown area to east and north of asphalt is newly scrapped area. Red alignment lines were used to estimate extent of assumed paved area (next slide).

Note that the light sandy brown area (i.e., unasphalted area) gives no indication of being “a thin layer of dirt” on a pre-existing cement pad.



Untilted, unrotated Google Earth image used to estimate area of the paved region shown in Photo 23. Alignment lines shown in previous slide were used to locate eastern and northern boundaries; vegetation rows to estimate location of southern and western boundaries. This newly paved area estimated to be **11+ acres**.



Google Earth Imagery, 2025 (prior to any detention center construction). Note the N-S and E-W patterning, which is likely from equipment such as mowers or brush hogs criss-crossing this area. Vegetation that needed mowing would not grow on top of cement.

Appendix B to Exhibit 1



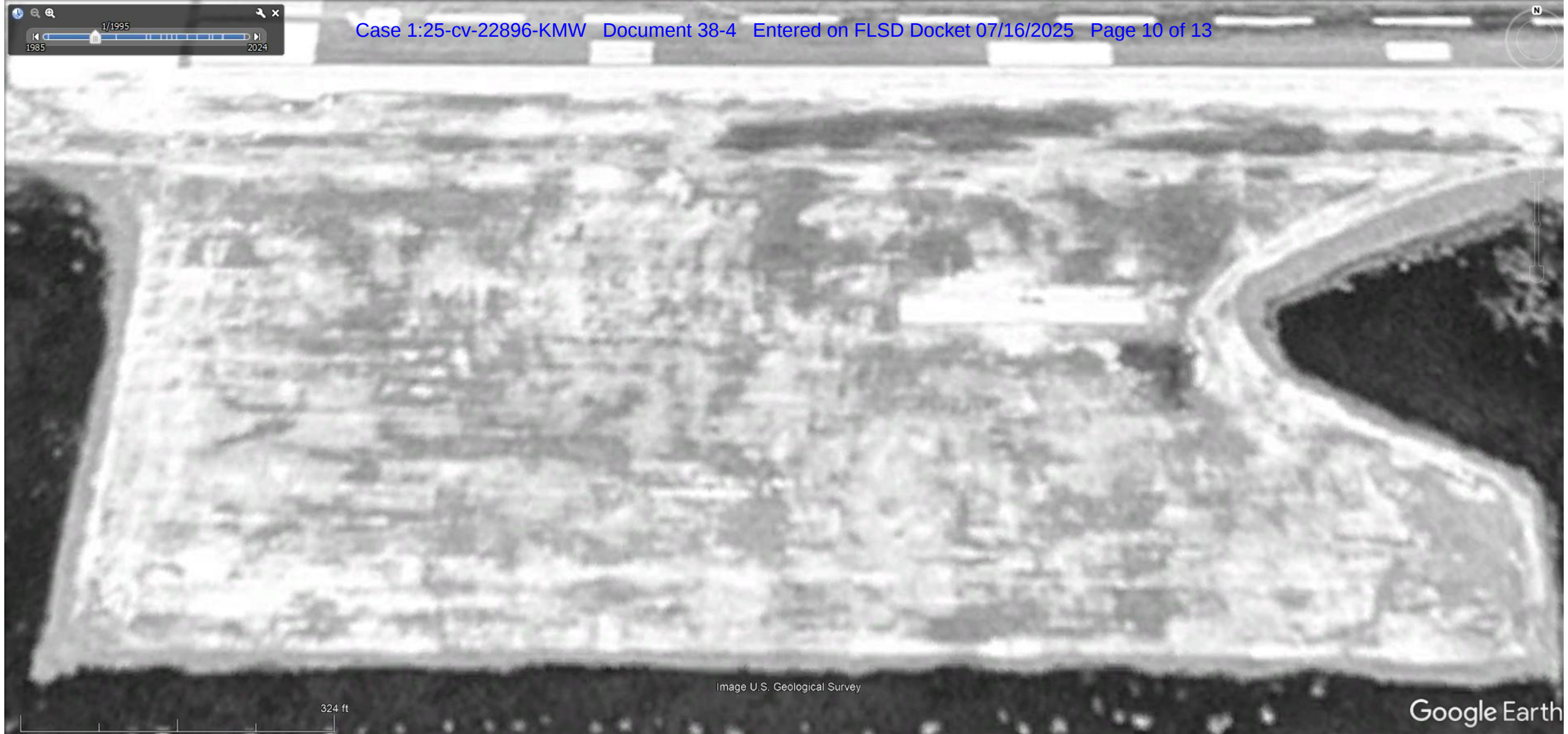
Google Earth historical imagery, 2014. Note the E-W patterning, which is likely from mowing equipment. Vegetation that needed mowing would not grow on top of cement.

Appendix B to Exhibit 1



Google Earth historical imagery, 2009. Note the E-W patterning, which is likely from mowing equipment. Vegetation that needed mowing would not grow on top of cement.

Appendix B to Exhibit 1



Google Earth historical imagery, 1995. Note the E-W patterning, which is likely from mowing equipment. Vegetation that needed mowing would not grow on top of cement.

Appendix B to Exhibit 1



Image Landsat / Copernicus

Google Earth

Google Earth historical imagery, 1985 (from Landsat). Resolution too coarse to be of use

Appendix B to Exhibit 1

<https://pbase.com/donboyd/image/165484225>

COURTESY OF ALVIN LEDERER

DONBOYD.NET

1970 - aerial view
of the Dade
County Training &
Transition Airport
under
construction

Appendix B to Exhibit 1



<https://pbase.com/donboyd/image/165484225>

“1970 - aerial view of the Dade County Training & Transition Airport under construction.”

Red oval is area of new (2025) paving. It does not at all look covered with cement in 1970, the year construction was halted.